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Eastwood Welcomes Guarantee of No Hard Border



Posted on 08/12/2017

by [Colum Eastwood MLA](#)

SDLP Leader Colum Eastwood has welcomed the breakthrough in the Brexit negotiations and the guarantee of no hard border on the island of Ireland. The SDLP Leader emphasised that the agreed text provides proper recognition on the protection and implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

The Foyle MLA said,

“The SDLP will study this agreed text in detail over the course of the morning and we would obviously add the caution that the Brexit negotiation still has a long way to run.

“We welcome the guarantee that there can be no hard border in Ireland - a guarantee which will mean and can only mean continuing alignment with the European single market and customs union. We fully acknowledge the work of the Irish Government and our diplomats in achieving this guarantee.

“It appears the DUP tantrum has achieved small changes in emphasis and language in terms of the constitutional status. If emphasis and language is the price of progress for avoiding a new border in Ireland – then so be it.

“Those of us interested in preventing a hard border in Ireland and protecting our businesses and our people will focus on the substance.

“The specific emphasis on the role and relevance of the Good Friday Agreement is particularly welcome in this text. The European Union has been clear that the Good Friday Agreement embodies our ‘unique circumstances’ and is the very vehicle through which to protect our economic and political needs.

“That solution could obviously work far better if we have a functioning Executive and Assembly. That must now be the question posed to every political party in Northern Ireland. Surely this is the basis to resume talks to restore Stormont.

“More broadly, the prospect in the text that Britain itself may continue its alignment with European markets is to

be welcomed and developed. Across the island of Ireland, nationalism has been clear that we do not want borders or barriers on these islands, whether they are North/South or East/West.

“If the Brexiteers are finally waking up to the reality that imposing borders and barriers on trade and movement will cause economic and political harm to all our people – then it may represent a crucial turning point in the Brexit negotiations.”



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